

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are pending in this application. The Specification, Abstract, and claim 1 have been amended by way of the present Amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Specification was objected to as lacking the reference to the prior application and its current status. The Abstract was objected to as being improper, and claim 1 was objected to for informalities. In addition, claims 1, 3 and 5-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by, and under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over, Hernandez (U.S. Patent No. 5,540,994).

Paragraph [0001] in the Specification has been amended to indicate the current status in the reference to the prior application.

The Abstract has been amended to address the Examiner's objection and provide a concise statement of the invention in one paragraph. The amendment to the Abstract raises no question of new matter.

Claim 1 is hereby amended by changing the clause "a cluster of N peripheral slot centered" to read "a cluster of N peripheral slots centered".

In addition, claim 1 has been further amended to clarify the invention by reciting:

"....the spinneret plate comprising a cluster of N peripheral slots centered about a central point, each peripheral slot comprising a pair of slot segments joined at a junction point by concave cusps, each slot segment in one peripheral slot being confrontationally disposed with a slot segment in another peripheral slot"

Support for the amendment can be found in the specification at least at page 17 lines 30-35, Figures 1B, 2B, 3B, 4B, 5B, 6B, 7B, 8B, 9B, 10B, 11B, 12B, 13B, and 14B. Therefore, the amendment raises no question of new matter.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §102

The rejection of claims 1, 3, and 5-8 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Hernandez is respectfully traversed in view of the amendments made to claim 1.

Hernandez discloses a method of making multi-void fibers with a characteristic by which it can later be visually identified (column 1 lines 13-20). The spinneret capillary disclosed by Hernandez includes four individual segments designated 11, 12, 13, and 14 in the form of T-shaped slots with four radial slots 15, 16, 17, and 18 radiating outwards to join

outer peripheral slots 19, 20, 21, and 22 that are curved to form arcs of an incomplete circle (column 4 lines 65 to column 5 lines 20, and Figure 3).

However, Hernandez nowhere discloses the distinguishing features as recited in claim 1:

“...the spinneret plate comprising a cluster of N peripheral slots centered about a central point, each peripheral slot comprising a pair of slot segments joined at a junction point by concave cusps, each slot segment in one peripheral slot being confrontationally disposed with a slot segment in another peripheral slot.” (emphasis added)

That is, according to the spinneret of the instant invention, two slot segments in each peripheral slot are connected by cusps.

In contrast, the spinneret disclosed by Hernandez has no cusps in the joint of two slot segments. The shape of the slot segment is smooth and continuous, like a convex “T”.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 3 and 5-8 are not anticipated by Hernandez, and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §103

The rejection of claims 2, and 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hernandez (5,540,994) is respectfully traversed.

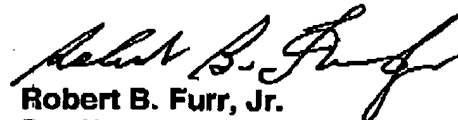
As discussed previously, Hernandez does not disclose the two slot segments connected by cusps as recited in claim 1 in the claimed invention. Claims 2 and 4 are dependent upon claim 1. It is not obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art to change the size and shape of the spinneret not taught by Hernandez. Thus, at least for the reasons discussed above, Hernandez does not disclose the limitations of claims 2 and 4.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claimed invention is not disclosed, made obvious, or taught by Hernandez and that claims 2, and 4 are patentably distinguish thereover.

CONCLUSION

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the attention and consideration accorded the Application. Should the Examiner determine that any further action is necessary to place the Application in condition for allowance, Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicant's attorney. It is not believed that any fees for additional claims, extensions of time, or the like are required beyond those that are otherwise indicated in the documents accompanying this paper. However, if such additional fees are required, Examiner is encouraged to notify Applicant's attorney at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,



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